School and Library Network Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
August 6, 1997

Members Present: Bill Black, Tom Romano, Gary Nichols, Linda Lord (for Raymond Poulin), Kim Cannon (for Barry McCrum), Stephen Gilbert, Phil Lindley, Reginald Palmer, Joanne Steneck

1.   Approval of Minutes from June 4, 1997 Meeting. Minutes approved.

2.   Status of School and Library Network Project. Chairman Welch and Commissioners Nugent and Hunt shared their views on the current status of the project. All viewed the work accomplished so far as excellent and emphasized the importance of now focusing attention on making maximum use of the funds available through the FCC's universal service order for schools and libraries. Chairman Welch said PUC staff would be available to assist as an information source but that the effort to obtain federal funds was the primary responsibility of the school and library representatives. The Commissioners also explained that it will be a challenge in the upcoming months for the Commission and local exchange carriers to find ways to meet the new legislative requirement that the Commission reduce intrastate access rates to federal levels by May 1999 (L.D. 812). Funds not spent in achieving the original goals for schools and libraries may be needed for this purpose. The Commissioners also asked for input on how schools and libraries could use federal funds to pay for part of the costs for the remaining years of the current School and Library Project.

3.   Report on Evaluation Planning. Tom Romano introduced Carol Mather of NYNEX who described a proposed survey process developed after consultation with the training subcommittee (Tom Romano, Joanne Steneck, Art Henry). Under the proposal, a mail survey will be sent to school principals and head librarians in early October. It was agreed that the proposal (with certain minor modifications) will be submitted to the Commission for its approval on August 18, 1997. If approved, Carol will provide the survey instrument for Board review and comment prior to the next Board meeting.

4.   Report on Project Expenses. Tom Romano distributed an update to the January report on project spending. Through June 30, 1997, NYNEX has spent $4.2 million and anticipates spending an additional $4.8 million through May 2000. If the project remains as currently designed and implemented, total cost will be $9.1 million.

5.   Funding Additional Computer Grants. Art Henry reported that the project has spent $499,400 of the $500,000 originally allocated for computer grants. Some additional grant requests are likely in the next few months as the few remaining eligible schools and libraries are connected. Phil suggested we may want to change the criteria for grants, e.g., allow those with 386's to get a new computer grant rather than an upgrade grant; possibly

lowering the new grant to $1,500 from $2,000. After discussion, it was agreed that it was fairest to everyone to not change the criteria. The Board agreed to ask the Commission to approve up to an additional $100,000 for computer grants, using the same criteria.

6.   Report from NYNEX on Applications and Installations. Art Henry distributed statistics on connection and training. As of August 4, of the 1,111 schools and libraries that have applied for connection, 1,077 or 97% have been installed. This includes 113 schools that received AEV funding. Currently, 1,182 sites have been determined to be eligible and 1,077 or 91% have been connected. Twenty-two sites declined service.

7.   Report from Training Subcommittee. Bill Black described a plan developed by the training subcommittee (Bill Black, Gary Nichols, John Pierce, Tom Romano, Ray Poulin). Under the proposal, three types of training would be available from September 1997 - June 1998): a repeat of the train-the-trainer training (The training package used last year except that the 8 modules would be packaged into separate sessions); individual computer based and video training (a library of education products would be developed by MIEC and loaned by State Library to interested sites); and site designed and delivered training (sites or groups of sites would submit proposals to MIEC for their own training). Projected cost for this upcoming year are $395,970. It was agreed to bring the proposal to the Commission for its approval on August 18. (Vote: 7 members for, 2 against.)

8.   Other. It was agreed that Phil Lindley would develop a press release on the status of the project for the PUC to issue around the first week of September.

        Next meeting will be September 12, 1997. The Agenda will be distributed the week before the meeting.